Imelda Marcos disqualified from holding office after corruption conviction

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Former Philippine first lady, currently an MP, is facing a jail after being found guilty on seven counts

Imelda Marcos will be allowed to remain free on bail while she appeals the conviction Photograph: Francis R Malasig/EPA

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Fri 9 Nov 2018 05.14 GMT

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The former first lady of the Philippines, who became renowned for her lavish collection of shoes, has been found guilty of seven counts of corruption during her twenty years in office.

Imelda Marcos, 89, is facing a jail sentence of between six and 11 years for each count of graft. The charges, the result of a court case which has been running for two decades, relate to private foundations she set up in Switzerland while holding public office between 1968 to 1986.

The arrest of Marcos, who was not present at the trial, was ordered immediately after the verdict was read out at. However, she will be allowed to remain free on bail while she appeals the conviction.

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The conviction also perpetually disqualified her from holding public office, meaning she will have to step down from her current position in the House of Representatives, where she is serving a third term.

In the 21 years that President Ferdinand Marcos was in power, he and his wife became infamous for amassing billions of dollars, with funds funnelled into Swiss bank accounts. Imelda Marcos in particular was known for her flaunting her opulent lifestyle while the country languished in poverty and civil unrest.

As well as being first lady, she was the minister of human settlements from 1976 to 1986 and governor of Manila from 1978 to 1984.

The family fled to Hawaii in 1986 when the army and the Philippine people turned against the president in a bloodless popular revolt. After they left, Marcos's collection of 1,100 shoes was put on display in the presidential palace to show people the extent of the riches she had accumulated while in office.

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This is not the first time that the former first lady has faced corruption charges. She returned to Manila in 1991 after her husband died in Honolulu but in 1993, she was convicted on two criminal corruption charges and sentenced to prison terms of nine to 12 years on each count. After an appeal the convictions were eventually quashed in the Supreme Court in 1998.

Her arrest was ordered again in 2009 for two counts of corruption but she posted bail and stayed out of jail.

The Marcos dynasty still has huge political power and influence in the Philippines. Imelda's son Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr narrowly lost the vice-presidential election in 2016, a result he is currently challenging, and many see him as the natural successor to President Duterte.

Duterte's spokesman, Salvador Panelo, said the ruling against Imelda Marcos was proof that the executive "is not in the business of exerting undue interference or influence on courts, and therefore respects the decision".